

Applicants : Cheree L. B. Stevens et al.
Appln. No. : 09/778,470
Page : 2

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-48 (canceled)

Claim 49 (currently amended): A food coating composition comprising from about 25% to about 70% by weight of the combination of a rice component and a dextrin component in a ratio of rice component to dextrin component of from about 1:2 to about 5:1, said composition being ~~substantially~~ free of corn starch.

Claim 50 (currently amended): The food coating composition of claim 49, wherein[[.]] the rice component comprises up to about 35% by weight of the solids content of the composition.

Claim 51 (currently amended): The food coating composition of claim 50 ~~which~~ further ~~comprises~~ comprising potato starch.

Claim 52 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 51, wherein the potato starch is a modified ungelatinized low-amylose content potato starch.

Claim 53 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 52 further comprising at least about 1% of at least one leavening agent.

Claim 54 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 53 further comprising at least about 0.1% of at least one stabilizing agent.

Claim 55 (currently amended): The food coating composition of claim 49 wherein ~~[[said]]~~ the ratio of rice component to dextrin component is from about 1:1 to about 5:1.

Applicants : Cheree L. B. Stevens et al.
Appln. No. : 09/778,470
Page : 3

Claim 56 (currently amended): The food coating composition of claim 55, wherein the rice component comprises up to about 30% by weight of the solids content of the composition.

Claim 57 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 56 which further comprises potato starch.

Claim 58 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 57, wherein the potato starch is a modified ungelatinized low-amylose content potato starch.

Claim 59 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 58 further comprising at least about 1% of at least one leavening agent.

Claim 60 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 59 further comprising at least about 0.1% of at least one stabilizing agent.

Claim 61 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 49, wherein the ratio of the rice component to the dextrin component is from about 2:1 to about 3.5:1.

Claim 62 (currently amended): The food coating composition of claim 61, wherein the rice component comprises up to about 30% by weight of the solids content of the composition.

Claim 63 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 62 which further comprises potato starch.

Claim 64 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 63, wherein the potato starch is a modified ungelatinized low-amylose content potato starch.

Applicants : Cheree L. B. Stevens et al.
Appln. No. : 09/778,470
Page : 4

Claim 65 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 64 further comprising at least about 1% of at least one leavening agent.

Claim 66 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 65 further comprising at least about 0.1% of at least one stabilizing agent.

Claim 67 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 66, wherein the stabilizing agent comprises methylcellulose.

Claim 68 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 66, wherein the stabilizing agent comprises xanthan gum.

Claim 69 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 66 further comprising at least about 0.1% of at least one color agent component.

Claim 70 (currently amended): The food coating composition of claim 69, wherein the color agent component comprises a color agent component ~~chosen~~ selected from the group ~~comprising~~ consisting of corn syrup solids, sucrose, whey, derivatives thereof, and combinations thereof.

Claim 71 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 66 further comprising at least about 1% of a salt component or derivative thereof.

Claim 72 (currently amended): The food coating composition of claim 64, wherein[[.]] the dextrin component comprises up to about 30% by weight of the solid contents of the composition.

Applicants : Cheree L. B. Stevens et al.
Appln. No. : 09/778,470
Page : 5

Claim 73 (currently amended): The food coating composition of claim 49, wherein[[,]] the rice component comprises a rice component ~~chosen~~ selected from the group ~~comprising~~ consisting of a short-grain rice flour component, a medium-grain rice flour component, a long-grain rice flour component, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 74 (currently amended): The food coating composition of claim 73, wherein the dextrin component comprises a dextrin component ~~chosen~~ selected from the group ~~comprising~~ consisting of corn dextrin, tapioca dextrin, potato dextrin, derivatives thereof, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 75 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 73, wherein the dextrin component comprises corn dextrin.

Claim 76 (currently amended): The food coating composition of claim 74, wherein[[,]] the dextrin component comprises a high-solubility dextrin.

Claim 77 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 74, wherein the dextrin component comprises a low-solubility.

Claim 78 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 49, wherein the composition further comprises an adherent.

Claim 79 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 78, wherein the adherent comprises a potato starch component.

Claim 80 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 79, wherein the potato starch component comprises a modified ungelatinized low-amylose content potato starch.

Applicants : Cheree L. B. Stevens et al.
Appln. No. : 09/778,470
Page : 6

Claim 81 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 79, wherein the potato starch component comprises up to about 50% by weight of the composition.

Claim 82 (cancelled)

Claim 83 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 49 further comprising at least about 1% of at least one leavening agent.

Claim 84 (currently amended): The food coating composition of claim 83, wherein the leavening agent comprises a leavening agent ~~chosen~~ selected from the group ~~comprising~~ consisting of an edible acid, an edible carbonate, derivatives thereof, and combinations thereof.

Claim 85 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 83, wherein the leavening agent comprises a combination of sodium acid pyrophosphate and sodium bicarbonate.

Claim 86 (currently amended): The food coating composition of claim 83~~[[,]]~~ further ~~including~~ comprising at least about 1% of at least one sweetening ingredient component.

Claim 87 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 86, wherein the sweetening ingredient component comprises sugar.

Claim 88 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 49 further comprising at least about 0.1% of at least one stabilizing agent.

Claim 89 (currently amended): The food coating composition of claim 88, wherein the stabilizing agent comprises a stabilizing agent ~~chosen~~ selected from the group ~~comprising~~

Applicants : Cheree L. B. Stevens et al.
Appln. No. : 09/778,470
Page : 7

consisting of a cellulose ~~ether~~ ether, a natural gum, an alginate, a polyalcohol, a water-soluble polymer, derivatives thereof, and combinations thereof.

Claim 90 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 49 further comprising a quantity of water mixed with the composition to form a slurry.

Claim 91 (previously presented): The food coating composition of claim 90, wherein the total slurry composition comprises about 30% to about 50% of dry coating composition based upon the total weight of the water and dry-mix components.

Claim 92 (currently amended): A method of providing increased surface crispiness and holding time to a food substrate comprising a step of:

applying a coating composition to the food substrate prior to finish[[ed as]] cooking the food substrate, wherein the coating composition comprises from about 25% to about 70% by weight of the combination of a rice component and a dextrin component in ratio rice component to dextrin component from about 1:2 to about 5:1, said coating composition being substantially free of corn starch.

Claim 93 (previously presented): The method of claim 92 further comprising the steps of combining the coating composition with a sufficient quantity of water to form a slurry, and applying the slurry to the food substrate.

Claim 94 (previously presented): The method of claim 93 further comprising the steps of pre-cooking and freezing the food substrate after coating the food substrate with the coating composition, and subsequently reconstituting the pre-cooked, coated, and frozen food substrate by using at least one of a gradient heat source, microwave, or fryer.

Applicants : Cheree L. B. Stevens et al.
Appln. No. : 09/778,470
Page : 8

Claim 95 (currently amended): The method of claim 94[[,]] further comprising the step of conditioning the food substrate by contacting it with a predetermined liquid prior to coating it with the composition.

Claim 96 (currently amended): The method of claim 92, wherein the coating composition comprises up to about 30% by weight rice component of the solids content of the composition and the rice component comprises a rice flour ~~chosen~~ selected from the group ~~comprising~~ consisting of a short-grain rice flour component, a medium-grain rice flour component, a long-grain rice flour component, derivatives thereof, and combinations thereof.

Claim 97 (currently amended): The method of claim 96, wherein the coating composition comprises a dextrin component wherein the dextrin component comprises up to about 30% by weight of the solids content of the coating composition and the dextrin component comprises a dextrin component ~~chosen~~ selected from the group ~~comprising~~ consisting of a corn dextrin, a tapioca dextrin, a potato dextrin, derivatives thereof, and combinations thereof.

Claim 98 (currently amended): The method of claim 96, wherein ~~[[said]]~~ the dextrin is a corn dextrin.

Claim 99 (previously presented): The method of claim 97, wherein the food coating composition further comprises a modified ungelatinized potato starch, wherein the ungelatinized potato starch comprises up to about 50% by weight of the solids content of the composition ~~[[period]]~~.

Claim 100 (currently amended): The method of claim 99, wherein the coating composition further comprises at least about 1% of at least one leavening agent, at least about 1% of at least one sweetening component, at least about 1% of at least one salt component, at least about

Applicants : Cheree L. B. Stevens et al.
Appln. No. : 09/778,470
Page : 9

0.1% of at least one stabilizing agent component, and at least about 0.1% of at least one color agent component.

Claim 101 (previously presented): The method of claim 92, wherein the coating composition is applied to the food substrate as a dry mix of ingredients.

Claim 102 (currently amended): The method of claim 101[[,]] further comprising the step of freezing the dry-mix coated food substrates without first parfrying them.

Claim 103 (currently amended): The method of claim 102[[,]] further comprising the step of finish cooking the coated food substrates after the food substrates have been frozen without parfrying.

Claim 104 (currently amended): The method of claim 102[[,]] further comprising the steps of cooking the coated food substrates after they have been frozen, holding the cooked coated food substrates for up to about 45 minutes, and then re-heating the held food substrates to serving temperature for consumption.

Claim 105 (previously presented): The method of claim 104, wherein the holding step is carried out at room temperature.

Claim 106 (previously presented): The method of claim 104, wherein the holding step is carried out under a heat source.

Claim 107 (previously presented): The method of claim 101, wherein the coated food substrates are finish-cooked after coating and without freezing.

Applicants : Cheree L. B. Stevens et al.
Appln. No. : 09/778,470
Page : 10

Claim 108 (currently amended): The method of claim 107[[,]] further comprising the steps of holding the cooked coated food substrates for up to about 45 minutes and re-heating the held food substrates to serving temperature for consumption.

Claim 109 (previously presented): The method of claim 108, wherein the holding step is carried out at room temperature.

Claim 110 (previously presented): The method of claim 108, wherein the holding step is carried out under a heat source.

Claim 111 (currently amended): A method of providing increased surface crispiness to a food substrate comprising the steps of:

providing an at least partially cooked potato substrate and a coating composition comprising ~~of about 25% to about 70% by weight of the~~ of a combination of a rice component and a dextrin component ~~in a ratio of rice component to dextrin component of from about 1:2 to about 5:1 and~~ wherein the composition is substantially free of corn starch;

adding a sufficient amount of a water to the food coating composition to form a water-dispersible slurry;

applying the water-dispersible slurry to the potato substrate; and
cooking the potato substrate,

thereby providing a potato substrate having increased crispiness and holding time as compared to an uncoated, cooked potato substrate.

Claims 112-124 (cancelled)